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ABSTRACT

Intended for physical education teachers, the booklet provides guidelines for services as identified under Georgia special education requirements. An initial section offers general guidelines for consideration of student placement in specially designed physical education programs. A following section describes regular and adapted physical education services required in Georgia. Subsequent sections consider definition, evaluation, and placement of children with the following disabilities: behavior disorders, speech and language impairment, physical and multiple handicaps, visual impairment, hearing impairment, deaf/blind, severely and trainable mentally retarded, educable mentally retarded, and learning disabilities. (SB)

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Resource On Handicapping Conditions: Special Education Students In Georgia

PROJECT DART

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Resource On Handicapping Conditions: Special Education Students In Georgia

This booklet was produced to be used in conjunction with the information presented in Project Darts Phase I and Phase II Workshops.

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A COOPERATIVE PROGRAM OF THE UNIVERSITY OF GEORGIA AND THE DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN RESOURCES UNDER A GRANT FROM THE BUREAU OF EDUCATION FOR THE HANDICAPPED, USOE

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Introduction

The Program for Exceptional Children of the Georgia State Department of Education has published a series of resource manuals providing guidelines for comprehensive educational services for special education children. Project DART has reviewed each manual that pertains to a specific handicapping condition. The resource manuals for Hospital/Home Instruction and Gifted were ommitted. Included were:

Volume	Title
III	Behavior Disorders
V	Visually Impaired
VII	Speech and Language Impaired
VIII	Physically and Multihandicapped
IX	Hearing Impaired
XI	Deaf/Blind
I	Severely and Trainable Mentally Retarded
II	Educable Mentally Retarded
IV	Specific Learning Disabilities

This booklet is an attempt to condense this information in order to provide the physical educator with at least a rudimentary understanding of handicapping conditions as identified under Special Education in Georgia.

When dealing with handicapped students in a mainstreamed setting a teacher can be confronted with a variety of attitudes. It has been shown that more positive attitudes can be generated with increased knowledge.

The specific resource manuals referred to here plus excellent filmstrips and other materials can be obtained through the Georgia Learning Resource System (GLRS), the Cooperative Educational Service Agency (CESA) and the Local Education Agency (LEA). By acquainting the class with the various handicapping conditions prior to the arrival of special needs students, a more positive attitude towards mainstreaming may be developed. Too, the physical educator may find some of the information useful in better understanding the learning capacities and capabilities of the special education student in his or her class. Many of the over 100,000 children and youth in Special Education in Georgia become the teaching responsibility of the regular physical educator.

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E. Bundschuh

General Guidelines for Consideration of Student Placement in Specially Designed Physical Education Programs

--performance below 30th percentile on standardized tests of motor development, motor proficiency, fundamental motor skills and patterns, physical fitness, game/sport skills and/or perceptual-motor functioning

--developmental delay of two or more years

--severe range of handicapping condition

--social-emotional and physical capacities and capabilities such that goals set for the regular physical education class are not appropriate for the special education student or if by the student's inclusion the goals for the regular physical education program have been significantly modified.

REGULAR AND ADAPTED PHYSICAL EDUCATION SERVICES
REQUIRED FOR THE SPECIAL EDUCATION SCHOOL CHILDREN AND YOUTH IN GEORGIA

DISABILITY	TOTAL NUMBER BY DISABILITY	% OF TOTAL POPULATION BY DISABILITY	% REQUIRING A.P.E. SERVICES	NUMBER REQUIRING A.P.E. SERVICES
HARD OF HEARING	2,000	2%	0%	0
DEAF	1,000	1%	50%	500
SPEECH IMPAIRED	27,000	27%	0%	0
VISUALLY IMPAIRED	1,000	1%	25%	250
BD/SED	14,000	14%	20%	2,800
ORTHOPEDICALLY IMPAIRED	1,000	1%	100%	1,000
HEALTH IMPAIRED	2,000	2%	45%	900
SLD	23,000	23%	25%	5,750
EMR/TMR	28,000	28%	35%	9,800
OTHER SEVERELY HANDICAPPED	1,000	1%	100%	1,000
TOTAL	100,000	100%	22%	22,000

Behavior Disorders

Public Law 94-142 refers to behavior disordered students as "severely emotionally disturbed." Georgia's APEG legislation describes these children as "emotionally handicapped" and "behaviorally disordered." In view of these two pieces of legislation the term behavior disorders, as used in Georgia, includes the emotionally disturbed and the emotionally handicapped.

Behavior disordered children are characterized by one or more of the following:

- --an inability to build or maintain satisfactory interpersonal relationships with peers and/or teachers
- --an inability to learn which cannot be adequately explained by intellectual, sensory, neurophysiological or general health factors
- --consistent or chronic inappropriate type of behavior or feelings under normal conditions
- --displayed pervasive mood of unhappiness or depression
- --displayed tendency to develop physical symptoms, pains or unreasonable fears associated with personal or school problems

Before placement of a child in a behavior disorder program, psychological and emotional evaluations and appropriate social history must be obtained.

The primary educational goal is to bring about

enough change to return the child to the regular public school program as soon as possible. It is important that the instructional program be an integral part of the school, home and community.

With the enactment of P.L. 94-142, it is necessary that the child be placed in the least restrictive environment as soon as possible. To ensure the goals of normalization, integration and academic achievement, it is necessary that resource rooms and itinerant teachers be utilized. All programming and placement is dependent on the severity of the student's needs. A major factor in planning a physical education program for the BD student is how well the services of the psychologists, psychiatrists, social workers and counselors plus others are integrated.

Major components that do affect change in behavior should be an integration of the student's academic and affective programs. From the State's philosophy of education of BD students, it should be noted that in a physical education setting, the affective domain greatly influences the program. Components of the affective program include:

--develop a positive self-concept
--learn to recognize and accept the feelings of others

--learn to express feelings appropriately
--to understand and accept the responsibility for one's behavior
--contribute to and gain satisfaction from working in groups

For maximum participation the behavior disorder student needs, through the help of the teacher, to develop appropriate group behavior.

Speech and Language Impairment

The Adequate Program for Education in Georgia legislation presents a definition of the terms "speech" and "language impairment" as a communication skill that differs enough to interfere with personal interactions. Speech-language impairments may also affect growth in areas such as educational, emotional, social and intellectual development. Speech impairments include language, articulation, voice and fluency disorders.

When, after using an informal assessment such as observation, the teacher feels the student cannot communicate adequately in the public school setting, then the child should be formally assessed by a speech-language pathologist to determine the least restrictive educational environment. To be placed in a special program, an evaluation is carried out encompassing the following areas: (a) articulation; (b) fluency; (c) learning; (d) hearing acuity; (e) language; (f) voice; and (g) adequacy of the oral mechanism. When a voice disorder is suspected, a laryngologist is used to determine the status of the vocal mechanism and the efficacy of speech therapy for correcting the cause of the disorder.

Degrees of severity on the level of the handicapping condition have been established and are as follows:

Severe - The child cannot be understood without a great deal of difficulty

Moderate - The child can be understood within a range of poor to fair degree of difficulty.

Mild - The child can be understood and exhibits only a small deviation of normal speech.

When teaching a speech or language impaired child, it is necessary to fully understand the extent of the condition and maintain personal "model communication habits."

Physically and Multi-handicapped

According to the Georgia Adequate Program for Education in Georgia Law, physically handicapped is defined as a body function or functions which are so severely impaired that the student cannot be safely instructed in the regular class of the public school on a full-time basis. Muscular or neuromuscular handicaps which limit the ability to move, sit or manipulate materials necessary for learning are examples of physically handicapping conditions. This definition would include skeletal deformations which would restrict movement as well as good posture. The multi-handicapped student possesses a physical or sensory handicap plus an additional handicapping condition. Examples of other health impairing conditions which result in reduced efficiency in school work and need to be considered are: (a) tuberculosis; (b) sickle cell anemia; (c) diabetes; (d) heart conditions; and (e) asthma.

To be placed in a special education program, the physically or multi-handicapped student must possess a physical and/or health related handicap in addition to meeting these specific criteria:

--health impairments so severe that full-time participation in a regular school setting is inappropriate;

--have an annual medical examination to determine changes in the physical condition; and

--a current medical report describing the handicapping condition and any medical implications for instruction.

Visually Impaired

To qualify as being visually impaired, visual loss must interfere with successful participation in the regular school setting.

Children to be served include those whose visual impairments interefere with successful functioning in a regular school program, thus requiring assistance. Examples are children whose visual impairments may result from congenital defects, eye diseases, severe refractive errors, or injuries to the eye. Visual impairment is determined on the basis of a current examination by an ophthalmologist/optometrist.

Partially Sighted

A partially sighted child is one whose visual acuity falls within the range of 20/70 to 20/200 in the better eye after correction, or when the child cannot read 18 point print at any distance. Some children with a visual acuity better than 20/70 will need specialized help for a limited time. The Placement Committee shall determine whether the visual loss constitutes an educational handicap.

Legally Blind

A legally blind child is one whose visual acuity is

20/200 or less in the better eye after correction, or who has a limitation in the field of vision that subtends an angle of 20 degrees. He/she falls within the definition of legal blindness although he/she may have some useful vision and read print.

Functionally Blind

A legally blind child who will be unable to use print as his/her reading medium is considered to be functionally blind. Instruction in braille and in use of recorded materials will be essential to his/her education.

Some characteristics that a visually impaired student might exhibit in physical activities are:

--the child performs poorly in games and locomotor movement

--displays lack of coordination

--exhibits poor eye-foot and eye-hand coordination

Hearing Impaired

Georgia's Adequate Program for Education in Georgia Law has the term hearing impaired broken down into two levels of ability: hard of hearing and deaf. A hearing impairment is any hearing problem which interferes with the learning process of the child. This interefference will affect the ability to learn and to speak properly and clearly. Hard of hearing is when a measurable amount of hearing loss limits the normal development of speech and auditory skills. Deaf is when there is a measurable amount of hearing loss in both ears with amplification which hinders considerably the normal development of speech and auditory skills.

These are three types of hearing loss:

--Sensory-neural hearing loss involves the inner ear and central nervous system, also called "nerve deafness" and cannot be cleared by medical treatment but can be improved by amplification devices.

--Conductive hearing loss which is a reduced conduction of sound from the outer ear and/or middle ear to the inner ear. In most instances, this condition can be cleared by medical treatment.

--Mixed hearing loss is a combination of sensory-neural and conductive hearing loss.

To become eligible for a hearing impaired program, a student must provide otological and audiological evalua-

tions, and, every two years, under the supervision of a certified/liscensed audiologist, an audiometric evaluation.

It is advised that the room or rooms where these students are taught be as far away from any excess noise as possible. Air conditioning and carpet are added conveniences that aid in absorbing excess noise both in and outside the classroom. Finally, amplification equipment should be used when and where needed.

Deaf/Blind

As defined by the Georgia Department of Education, a deaf/blind individual is one who has a vision and hearing impairment, the combination of which causes severe communication problems, such that the individual cannot be educated in a regular classroom for the deaf or the visually impaired.

As with any handicapping condition, certain criteria must be met for a student to be admitted to a deaf/blind program. These criteria are:

--a current medical report describing the child's handicapping condition;

--specific test from a qualified audiologist and an ophthalmologist; and

--a current Individualized Education Plan (I.E.P.).

To ensure that these handicapped students attain their maximum capacities, abilities and needs, it is important that a continuum of programming is designed from preschool through high school.

The State of Georgia has placed a restriction on the number of deaf/blind students that can be safely placed in a class setting. A self-contained classroom places a maximum limit of six deaf/blind students. In contrast, resource/itinerant teachers are limited to four

deaf/blind students maximum in their classes. Deaf/blind children are permitted in classrooms serving other handicapped children; however, it is recommended that a ratio of 1 to 6 (deaf/blind to other handicapped students) be maintained. To maximize the learning process, adequate facilities are necessary. The area must be barrier-free to aid in the ease of mobility as well as be acoustically treated and specially illuminated.

Trainable Mentally Retarded

According to the Georgia State Department of Education, the definition of trainable mentally retarded (TMR) is when a student usually has an intellectual ability approximately one-third to one-half that of a normal student with the same chronological age. To be considered eligible for a TMR program, a student must score more than three standard deviations below the mean of an individually administered psychological examination. Also, significant deficits must be present in the student's adaptive behavior.

Severely Mentally Retarded

According to the Georgia State Department of Education, the definition of severely mentally retarded (SMR) is when a student usually has an intellectual ability approximately two-thirds below that of a normal student with the same chronological age. The SMR eligibility criteria indicates that the student must score more than four standard deviations below the mean of an individually administered psychological examination. Also, significant deficits must be present in the student's adaptive behavior.

The role of the adaptive physical educator for TMR and SMR students would be to:

--provide in-service education to the special educator and to the other staff members;

--help serve as a resource person concerning fine and gross motor development to the TMR and SMR teacher;

--attend all IEP and placement meetings; and

--design and implement a physical education program suitable for the student's needs.

Facilities for the instruction of TMR and SMR students are equally important. Some of these requirements are:

--use the least restrictive environment as possible;

--keep the classroom as distraction-free as possible, and

--make the facilities as barrier-free as possible for those students with special physical needs.

Educable Mentally Retarded

The definition used by the Georgia State Department of Education states that the educable mentally retarded (EMR) individual has the potential for growth in the personal, social and emotional areas. Growth in these areas would directly lead to a more productive and independent lifestyle.

To be eligible, a student must score between two and three standard deviations below the mean of the individually administered psychological examination. Also, significant deficits in adaptive behavior must be exhibited. It should be pointed out that for a student to be placed in an EMR program, other pertinent data along with the results from the psychological tests administered is needed. This data is comprised of cognitive (educational and psychological evaluations) and adaptive behavior criteria (observation of the child, parent interviews, formal and informal checklists).

Learning Disabilities

The definition used by the Georgia State Department of Education for Specific Learning Disabilities is taken directly from the Federal Register. It states,

> "Specific Learning Disability" means a disorder in one or more of the basic psychological processes involved in understanding or in using language, spoken or written, which may manifest itself in an imperfect ability to listen, think, speak, read, write, spell or to do mathematical calculations. The term includes such conditions as perceptual handicaps, brain injury, minimal brain dysfunction, dyslexia and developmental aphasia. The term does not include children who have learning problems which are primarily the result of visual, hearing or motor handicaps, of mental retardation, of emotional disturbance or of environmental, cultural or economic disadvantage.

Based on the results of assessments, a severe discrepancy is demonstrated between ability and achievement in one or more of the following areas:

-oral expression
-listening comprehension
-written expression
-basic reading skill
-reading comprehension
-mathematics calculation
-mathematics reasoning

A contract for a grade can be used with an LD student in a regular physical education class. This contract form should enhance pupil understanding and teacher expectations of the course requirements. The LD teacher may

find the contract to be a useful guide in further directing and assisting the student. The physical educator may find it necessary to plan specific activities to remediate certain identified motor problems. Establishing goals and objectives on the IEP may assist in guiding a student's progress and highlighting achievements.